

Yellow Card Questions from Community Conversations March 23-28, 2015

Planning Questions

- Why did we wait 30 years to revise the plan?
- What is the difference between “landscape scale” and “National Forest scale?”
- What does the 1986 Plan encompass?
- Equal weight to various use voices—balance
- How will you balance usage of Forest and protection of ecosystem?
- Common sense
- Action
- Reasonable definitions
- NEPA—too long
- How much influence will inputs from this group have in the eventual plan? In other words, will direction from out of state or the government bureaucracy determine final plan over local comments?
- Will the FS consider the ideas and alternatives that are suggested by the local folks that live here, and the ranchers and other folks that make a living off this land, more than the other ideas of folks that don’t have as much at stake?
- Our communities just finished the Joint Land Use Study process. Will the Forest Plan increase use by the military? If so, will the public be involved via the NEPA process?
- Maybe each interested group could have a spokesperson to represent their concerns on some type of advisory board to the LNF.
- Does Forest Plan take into account available resources?
- Are pre-existing rights considered in our present plan? If not, we need to in the new plan.
- Will our input really be considered?
- What is the current mission statement? Is it valid for the future? Tie all plan revisions to the mission statement.
- Having a plan is great-I get that-but how are you going to implement the plan?
- Why has it taken 29+4 (33) years to come up with a plan when FS says every 15 years?
- The “leaders” talk too much. This style forum is excellent.
- How do the rights (to hike, hunt, camp, fish, bird, wildlife photography) of other 49 states’ citizens become part of USFS Lincoln Plan?
- What is the Planner’s background?
- Why has it taken so long to revise the Forest Plan?
- I would like a copy of all overhead presented by Forest.
- Why is it only one guy’s decision what is done? It should be a board of people, not just one person.
- How to make certain a recreational use such as back-country aviation or fly-fishing is recognized in the plan?
- What are next steps in the plan?
- How does a State agency become a collaborator in developing the EIS/management plan?

- What impact will the new plan have on current wildlife?
- Is this the first time/year the community has been this involved? How has this process changed since the last time it was done?
- What is baseline? 1986? 1950?
- Seems like a large push for wilderness designations, portion of public does not think FS & BLM are protecting.

Funding

- Why are more acres added to USFS when funding isn't adequate to support existing acreage?
- Are there more forest acres than budget dollars to support?
- Will there be any funding for management practices?
- How is the LNF funded? What agency? Stable?

Recreation

- Is recreational use of forest land declining or increasing? And which forests are seeing more & less use?

Information

- Link on website for current forest management plan didn't work today.
- How can we receive more info on how we can support the FS on projects that will improve our Forest & Community?

Involvement

- We need more people involved.
- Transparency & trust needs faster response to FS permitting.

Insects & Disease

- What about bugs?
- Bark beetle eradication

Noxious Weeds

- What about noxious weeds & plants?
- FS do the weed program.
- USDA policies of 1990 & 1991 states that the NFS has responsibility to prevent, control & eradicate noxious weeds. How does the FS work in conjunction with landowners to eradicate/control weeds (ie, juniper) resulting in increased water supply for the mountains/grazing?

Fire

- Need more roads for fire guards.
- Need to educate public on forest & fires.

- Mother Nature had fire often so there was less chance of larger fires. Maybe more controlled burns to keep down fuel.
- Why did the BAER Team on the Little Bear Fire destroy 4 acres of my allotment and not fix it?

Access

- Limited access to areas because of wrongful management.
- Public access (crossing private land) procuring easements.
- Why are 4x4 vehicles being shut out of forest trails? The young that ride motorcycles & hike have more places to go. Elderly cannot walk trails or ride bikes to see and enjoy the forest.
- Will I be able to drive my 60" UTV on the trails?

Wildlife

- Spotted owl & timber management
- Are recovery plans for endangered species really trying to see if the species has recovered?
- While hiking & hunting in the LNF I see water collection facilities that have fallen into disrepair. What is the plan to repair these facilities or are they another agency's responsibility?
- Wildlife numbers have grown to unmanageable numbers. What is the plan to correct this?

NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act)

- Is it possible to develop a process or policy that would allow local control to allow maintenance of the range resource without NEPA and other processes that hinder basic maintenance of erosion control and timber management? Is an exclusion for maintenance of range resources a possibility?
- Why does the LNF take so long to do NEPA? 5 years for my allotment renewal.

Water & Watersheds

- Watershed condition of Capitan Mt. Don't forget lower watershed users.
- Protect and enhance the watershed by logging, thinning & controlled burns to return the Lincoln to a healthy forest & recharge the watershed.
- The Mescalero Reservation has improved their forest & the USFS should follow their lead. Example: The Rio Felix Springs improved during the recent drought.
- What water rights go with an allotment for grazing?

Soils

- Soil conditions and stability.

Management

- Is there a way for the public or local partners/organizations to help/stimulate policy/act amendments that will help the agency be more effective on the ground?

Vegetation Management

- How much would thinning standing dead trees help improve the forest ecosystem?
- What are the costs of thinning trees out of the forest?
- More timber harvesting.
- Stop following extreme environmental group requests such as stopping logging in the 1980s to protect the spotted owls.
- How to remove dead & diseased trees out of LNF (my property backs up to it). How can I get permission to do?
- Why has the Forest not been thinned?

Wilderness

- Can mechanical tools be allowed for firefighting in wilderness?

Grazing

- Will you continue to protect the use of our grazing allotments?
- How many acres with the Forest are being grazed?
- Have livestock on public lands
 - a) compacted soil,
 - b) aided the distribution of invasive noxious weeds, or
 - c) trampled headwaters or streams?
- Does grazing reduce the competitive ability of native plants to out-compete exotic, noxious, invasive weeds?
- Are livestock trampling the biological crust?
- Is livestock use causing degradation of streamside areas?
- Who monitors for overgrazing on lease allotments? How often?
- How many ranchers are there on public land in Otero County?